



Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Risk management seminars explore challenges, opportunities for dairy farmers

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Department of Agriculture is offering free seminars for dairy producers to explore the current risks and challenges of running a dairy in the 21st century. The seminars will highlight new management practices and technologies that can reduce the impact those risks have on running a successful business.

WSDA currently licenses around 550 dairies, but the industry has experienced significant consolidation in recent years. Over the past three decades, the number of dairy farms in Washington has declined by more than 80 percent.

The seminars are aimed at identifying the causes of that disturbing trend and offering practical solutions to preserve the way of life on the family dairy farm. Major topics of discussion will include animal health management, consumer health issues, farm security, farm income diversification and preserving agricultural lands in the face of development pressures.

“This is a good opportunity for producers to gather information and ideas on how to increase profitability,” said Jay Gordon, executive director of the Washington State Dairy Federation, a co-sponsor of the seminars.

The daylong seminars will be held in:

- **Yakima** – Wed., Sept. 6 at the Yakima Convention Center
- **Lynden** – Wed., Sept. 13 at the Northwest Washington Fairgrounds
- **Chehalis** – Thurs., Sept. 14 at the Yardbirds Mall Conference Center

Following the seminars, participants will have the option to tour local dairies that are using cutting-edge technologies or value-added processing to improve herd health, reduce uncertainty in the operation and improve the profitability of the dairy.

Lunch will be provided free of charge to all seminar participants.

The seminars are funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Risk Management Agency. Washington State University Extension is also sponsoring the series.

More information is available at www.agr.wa.gov. Space is available on a first come, first served basis. Interested dairy producers should RSVP to Julie Chess at 360-902-1858 or jchess@agr.wa.gov.

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